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A
LETTER

TO A
Member of Parliament.

Written upon the
RUMOUR

OF AN
Invasion.

L O N D O N,
Printed in the Year M D C C X I X.

1797. 12. 14. 7

LETTER

Member of Parliament

RUMOUR

And

Printed in the Year MDCCLXIX

A
LETTER

TO A

Member of Parliament.

S I R,

I Have been, and still continue to be so much engag'd, in Reviewing some Accounts and Papers of Moment, that I could find no Leisure to Copy those loose Papers, that contain my Project for a *well Regulated Militia*, which I promis'd to put in Your Hands in the *Easter-Week*: And this *Session* draws so near a Conclusion, and the *Militia-Bill* now before the *Honourable House*, being ready to pass the Third Reading; I see no room for admitting my Papers to be heard in a Committee, if I had 'em ready for that Purpose. And I hope, and with all true Englishmen expect such a Proof of the great Care and Wisdom of

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Your

Your *Honourable House*, in settling the *Militia* at so Critical a Juncture as this; that all the *Private Schemes*, form'd by Men, that are Sincere Lovers of their Native Counry, shall be Infinitely out-done by the united Prudence and Vigilance of so many *Glorious Asserters* of our *Liberties*, as are *Members* in this *Present Parliament*. 'Tis a Matter of so great Consequence to the present Government, and indeed to the whole Body of the People, and the *Liberties* of *England*, that the Kingdom shou'd be put into a good Posture of Defence, and be well provided against a *Foreign Invasion*; that I'm confident, there's not a Gentleman, Sitting and Debating within the Walls of that *Honourable House*, that could ever be perswaded to pardon himself, if it were possible for him not to contribute all the Skill and Advice he is Master of, to bring to the greatest Perfection a *Bill* of that *Unspeakable Importance* to his *Native Country*.

And when I find most of my Acquaintance have the like Sentiments of Your present Deliberation, I confess 'tis to them, and to me too, a sufficient Antidote against the Fears and Jealousies hat every Body, in a manner, is amus'd withal, upon the Rumour of an *intended Invasion* from abroad. I venture to say, Fears and Jealousies, because I meet with a great many People every-where, that are apt to fancy, We should be in a very unprovided Condition, if 30 or 40000 Disciplin'd Men should Land upon us, now the Regular Troops are reduc'd to

7000 Men, and the Invaders would meet with no Body to oppose 'em, but a *Raw Unexperienced Militia*, and they not to be drawn into any considerable Body under a Month or Six Weeks. This I assure you, is a mighty uneasie reflection to many good Men, and they begin with Impatience to desire Your Bill may pass out of Hand, that pursuant to the Model of it, We may be so well prepar'd, that no Foreign State may *dare* to think of Invading us. For my part, I should be very ready to have no great Opinion of any State but ours, that consisted in a Body of about 1,500,000 Men, capable of bearing Arms, and they posses'd a Large, Fruitful, Wealthy Country, of above Thirty Millions of Acres; and yet, upon a Rumour of an Enemy of 30 or 40000 Men approaching their Frontiers, should immediately fall into a Great and General Consternation, and consequently run into such Confusion, as to be incapable of making any Opposition; but *scour away* like a *terrify'd Mob*, or *fly like a Flock of Sheep*. And yet 'tis no Wonder, that a Populous Country, and a Generous Free People, as the People of *England* are, should be Alarm'd, when they have a Fertile Soil, Great and Valuable Liberties, and many Thousand Lives to lose; if they can trust to nothing but a *Country Rabble*, or a *Giddy Multitude*, for their Preservation. I am therefore of Opinion, 'tis the happiest Policy, that any State can practice, so to model its Subjects, and their Estates, that in Cases of extreme Publick Danger, the whole united Power of both may be so readily collected,

as to make the bravest Defence *with their own Hands*, without sending to *Foreign Countries* for Assistance; which every Body, that has read our Chronicle knows, has been often Fatal to *England*: And I am sure it remains an *Indelible Reproach* upon Our Ancestors, that their Discord was so Notorious, and Government, at some times, was so Imprudent and Impotent, that when they were Invaded by one Neighbour, they were often oblig'd to send to others, and give them an Invitation to Invade 'em, to save their Liberties; and when they have so done, pay their Saviours with an absolute Surrender of the Liberties they came to redeem. The *English*, or the Inhabitants of this *Island*, were often in this Humour, and as often smarted for it before the Times of *William* the First, and hardly ever succeeded, but in the Case of *William* the Third, a *Prince of Unparell'd Virtues*, and an *Unalterable Friend to Liberty*. The petty Princes and States of *Italy* and *Germany*, having but small Territories, and few Subjects are often put upon this Shift: Some Potent Neighbouring Princes are chosen their Protectors; and because they cannot subsist alone, they admit Foreign Troops into their Garrisons, to secure their Towns and Government.

10 But *England* certainly is a Countrey of so large an extent, and so well fill'd with *Strong* and *Able Men*, and those Men are of so true a *Natural Courage*, that 'tis impossible for us to want help from *Abroad*, in any occasion whatever, if our own Countrymen are but well

well Arm'd and Disciplin'd at Home; and 'tis our own fault if we either have not been, or are not so now; and the fear of an Invasion is justly Chargeable upon our selves, if we are not so well prepar'd, as to let all the World know *they may come if they dare*. For who *durst* think of such an Enterprize, if he were sure to be receiv'd at his Landing with *Sixty Thousand Brave Fellows*, under good Discipline, and skilful Officers, ready to Cut the *Intruders in pieces*, and force *em into the Salt Water*? The Thirteen Cantons of Switzerland possess a Tract of Land, that in Value and Number of People, I dare say, don't exceed the Three Counties of Kent, *Suffex*, and *Surry*; and tho' the Countrey makes a very rude and troublesome March, yet the Militia is so well Order'd, that upon occasion they can bring into the Field, in Ten Days time, a compleat Army of Fifty or Sixty Thousand Men; and sooner too, if we may believe those who have been there. Now if the People here were as well Disciplin'd as the *Switzers* are, or according to the Model I have drawn; I see no manner of reason to doubt, that should an Enemy of Twenty or Thirty Thousand Men Land in any part of *Kent* or *Suffex*; within One Weeks time those Three Counties beforementioned, with a Body of Men drawn out of the City of *London*, all amounting to Sixty or Seventy Thousand Men, should be upon their Bones, and Cut *em off every Man*. But were we once but so well provided as the *Swiss* Cantons are, we might be confident no Body would have to do with us. And our *Women* and *Children* would then *Despise* those very Forces, of which a great many Men
amongst

amongst us now seem to be afraid. But should one of our Neighbours, destitute of Faith and Trust, make an Attempt upon us at this present Juncture, the fittest Expedient that I can think of, is, That a Resolve of the House, His Majesty may immediately issue a Proclamation, to all Officers and Soldiers that have Serv'd in the late War, to render themselves by such a Day, at such a Place, where they shall have such Encouragements, as, Two Shillings *per diem* for a Foot-Soldier, Four Shillings *per diem* for a Dragoon, and Six Shillings *per diem* for a Horseman, during the Expedition, a Gratuity of the Rebels Estates, when the Service is over, and a Pardon to the Families of those who fall in the Service; join with these the Militia of London, and of the nearest Counties, to the place of Invasion; and I would hope these might serve our turn for the present, if occasion be, which God forbid: And for the future, I hope we shall be put in so good a Posture by the present Parliament, as to make all our Neighbours utterly despair of ever succeeding in any pretended Invasion of England.

I am, Sir,

With very great Veneration,

Your most Obedient,

Humble Servant,

H. H.

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